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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/516,554	11/30/2004	Patricia Anne Goede	T9924.PCT.US	7087
20451 7590 10/30/2007 GRANT R CLAYTON CLAYTON HOWARTH & CANNON, PC P O BOX 1909 SANDY, UT 84091-1909			EXAMINER YANG, RYAN R	
			ART UNIT 2628	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/516,554	Applicant(s) GOEDE ET AL.	
	Examiner Ryan R. Yang	Art Unit 2628	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 August 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 and 28-34, 41-56 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17, 28-34 and 41-56 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 35-40 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: Response to Election/Restriction, filed on 8/6/2007. This action is non-final.
2. Claims 18-27 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected Group II, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 8/6/2007.
3. Claims 1-17, 28-34 and 41-56 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 28 and 41 are independent claims.

This application is a 371 of PCT/US03/17138 filed 5/31/2003, which claims benefit of 60/384,703 filed 5/31/2002.

4. The present title of the invention is "System and method for visual annotation and knowledge representation" as filed originally.

Claim Objections

5. The claims are objected to because the lines are crowded too closely together, making reading difficult. Substitute claims with lines one and one-half or double spaced on good quality paper are required. See 37 CFR 1.52(b).

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required:

in claim 42, "MIME" lacks antecedent basis.

In claim 44, "a sequence axis" lacks antecedent basis.

In claim 45, "channel dimension" lacks antecedent basis.

In claim 48, "display of at least a portion of the annotations based upon previously defined viewing rights assigned to each user" lacks antecedent basis.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 42, 44, 45 and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. Claims 1, 8, 12, 13, 16, 41-45, 50 and 51 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Higgins et al. (US Pub. No. 2003/0052896).

As per claim 1, Higgins et al., hereinafter Higgnins, discloses a method for visually annotating a digital image, said digital image being raster based, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a digital image (Figure 7, item 400 and Figure 2 is a digital raster map);

annotating said digital image (Figure 8, item 500);

storing electronically said annotations as vector based information linked to said digital image such that the digital image remains in a substantially unaltered condition

("a vector map may be viewed as a "virtual" map that comprises, in effect, a collection of stored data", [0018], and "the related georeferencing functions are stored as is their association with the FIG. 2" [0072] where the vector map does not substantially altering the digital map); and

rendering said digital image with the annotations for display such that the annotations can be perceived by a user ("the maps may be viewed simultaneously", Abstract).

8. As per claim 8, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1, and further discloses

at least one member selected from the group consisting of a region of interest, a pointer, a symbol, a caption, a label and an abbreviation (Figure 1 or 3 is a region of interest).

9. As per claim 12, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1, and further discloses the annotation comprises a region of interest, said region of interest being defined by one selected from the group consisting of:

a set of points, a polygon, and a polyline ([0018] where annotations are represented by vector map).

10. As per claim 13, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1, and further discloses the step of rendering the image with the annotations comprises the step of displaying the annotations in a context appropriate display (Figure 8, item 525 where annotation displayed is considered context appropriate).

11. As per claim 16, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1, and further discloses the annotations are uniquely identified ([0057] where the marked points are unique point-pairs and they are vector map representing annotations).

12. As per claim 41, Higgins discloses a system for visually annotating digital data stored in a electronic file, the system comprising:

an extraction means for extracting data from the electronic file to create a visual representation of the digital data (Figure 7, item 400 where digital image is extracted and displayed);

an organizing means for assembling the extracted data into a visual representation that reflects the digital data (Figure 7, item 405 where a selected image is displayed);

a constructing means for permitting a human user to manually create dimensionally appropriate annotations (Figure 2 and 6 and [0064] where the image could be zoomed and scaled);

a storing means for electronically storing the annotations as vector information such that the digital data stored in the electronic file is substantially unaltered ("a vector map may be viewed as a "virtual" map that comprises, in effect, a collection of stored data", [0018]; since the annotations are primary points and nodes, the digital map is substantially unaltered); and

a presenting means for displaying the visual representation of the digital data along with the annotations (Figure 6 and Figure 7, item 445).

13. As per claim 42, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41, and further discloses wherein the extraction means identifies the format of the electronic file based upon the electronic file extension, MIME type as embedded into the electronic file or provided externally as metadata, or user input ("commonly used formats for storing scanned images currently include TIFF, JPEG, and PNG", [0017]).

14. As per claim 43, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41, and further discloses wherein the visual representation of the digital data is a single visual data element that has the dimensions of the original data (Figure 2 is a FEMA regular panel which has single visual data element has the dimension of the original data).

15. As per claim 44, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41, and further discloses wherein the visual representation of the digital data is a sequence of visual data elements that each has the dimension of the original digital data, but has an additional dimension that defines a sequence axis ("Figure 1, 3 and 4 which are generalized or symbolic representation" which "may represent population density maps, air quality maps, FEMA flood maps, or any other map depicting a geographic area" [0005] which are considered a sequence of visual elements that each has the dimension of the original digital data, since they are different representations with annotations of the same image, they are considered additional dimension that defines a sequence axis).

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16. As per claim 45, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41, and further discloses wherein the visual representation of the digital data is a set of visual data elements that each has the dimension of the original digital data, but has an additional channel dimension where each visual data element represents the same conceptual space ("Commonly used formats for storing scanned images currently include TIFF, JPEG, and PNG", [0017] where each format represents a channel dimension).

17. As per claim 50, Higgins discloses a system for annotating an image, said system comprising:

means for storing a raster based digital image in a file ("When the user is finished, the system stores the active georeferencing functions with the raster map of FIG. 2", [0072]);

means for displaying said raster based digital image (Figure 7, item 400);

means for creating vector based annotations related to said image ("A vector map is created through the placements of nodes on a plane and connecting those nodes with lines to form closed polygons" [0029]); and

means for linking said vector based annotations to said digital image such that said annotations are related to said digital image and said digital image is preserved in its original condition ("a vector map may be viewed as a "virtual" map that comprises, in effect, a collection of stored data", [0018], and "the related georeferencing functions are stored as is their association with the FIG. 2" [0072]).

18. As per claim 51, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 50, and further discloses a presenting means for displaying said digital image and associated annotations (Figure 7, item 450, and "the maps may be viewed simultaneously", Abstract).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

19. Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. (US Pub. No. 2003/0052896) and further in view of Zalis (US Pub. No. 2002/0097320).

As per claim 2, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose the digital image is an image of at least a portion of a human body, however, this is known in the art as taught by Zalis. Zalis discloses a method of annotation on at least of human body image [0057].

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Zalis into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Zalis discloses the annotated image could be a part of a human body in order to facilitate medical analysis.

20. As per claim 3, Higgins and Zalis demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 2, and Zalis further discloses the step of annotating the digital image includes the step of defining a region of interest and adding textual information ("annotate (e.g. by addition of a marker, icon or other means) or otherwise identify

regions of interest in an image (e.g. by drawing a line around the region in the image, or changing the color of the region in the image) [0057]).

21. Claim 4, 6, 7, 17, 55 and 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. (US Pub. No. 2003/0052896).

As per claim 4, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1, and further discloses, wherein the step of storing comprises

storing said annotations in a second file and said digital image is stored in a first file ("A digital raster map may be created ... using a computer system to define and/or display it in terms of its pixel locations and color values. Commonly used formats for storing scanned images currently includes TIFF, JPEG, and PNG", [0017] and "A vector map may be viewed as a "virtual" map that comprises, in effect" a collection of stored data. The stored data define the locations of plural nodes and plural straight-line segments interconnecting the nodes. The stored data defining a vector map represents geographic information in the form of collections of points – the nodes – and line segments interconnecting the nodes to form polygons and/or path ..." [0018]).

It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose storing annotation (vector image) in a second file and digital image in a first file. However, since the vector image and the digital image are two image types, it is notoriously well known (Official Notice) in the art that two different image types are stored in different files in order to properly store and retrieve the image data.

22. As per claim 6, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

As for storing said annotations as text information, since it notoriously well known in the art (Official Notice) that a vector image (which is used to represent annotations in this application) could be represented as text information, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use such format in order to save memory space.

23. As per claim 7, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 6.

As for the annotations are stored in an XML compatible format, since it notoriously well known in the art (Official Notice) that a markup language is used to represent text information, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use such format in order to facilitate sharing of information.

24. As per claim 17, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

As for the digital image comprises a sequence of digital images, since it is notoriously well known in the art that digital images could be stored in a sequence (Official Notice), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to store the image in a sequence in order for easy storage and retrieval.

25. As per claims 55 and 56, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 52, and since it is notoriously well known in the art that an annotation can be input through a self contained user interface, it would have been obvious

(Official Notice) to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate it in order to input a command.

26. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of DeAguiar et al. (US 5,101,436).

As per claim 5, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose storing said annotations in the same file which contains the digital image, however, this is known in the art as taught by DeAguiar et al., hereinafter DeAguiar. DeAguiar discloses a hybrid image editor in which a raster and vector image are stored in a file (Abstract).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of DeAguiar into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating a raster image and DeAguiar discloses vector and raster image data could be stored together in order to save memory space.

27. Claims 9, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Skoll et al. (US 6,684,379).

As per claim 9, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 8.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose the step of hierarchically organizing the annotations into logical groupings pursuant to a user defined structure, however, this is known in

the art as taught by Skoll et al., hereinafter Skoll. Skoll discloses a method of analyzing image in which annotation objects can be hierarchically grouped into annotation object groups (column 11, line 16-20).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Skoll into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating image and Skoll discloses annotations could be hierarchically grouped in order to facilitate manipulation.

28. As per claim 28, since the claim limitation is a combination of claims 1 and 9 (Higgins in view of Skoll), therefore it is similarly rejected as claim 9.

29. As per claim 29, since the claim limitation is a combination of claims 28 and 13, therefore it similarly rejected as claim 13.

30. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of Basu et al. (US 2004/0205482).

It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose wherein at least part of the annotation utilizes user defined lexicons, however, this is known in the art as taught by Basu et al., hereinafter Basu. Basu discloses a method of creating annotations in which the lexicon can be adaptive and dynamic and constrained by either the user or the system or both [0033].

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of of Basu into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Basu disclose an annotation could be user defined in order to reduce the burden of user interaction.

31. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Lloyd-Jones et al. (US 2002/0055955).

As per claim 11, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose wherein metadata is also stored along with the annotations, however, this is known in the art as taught by Lloyd-Jones et al. Lloyd-Jones et al disclose a method of annotating an image where the metadata associated with an icon annotation is stored ([0047] claim 2).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Lloyd-Jones et al into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Lloyd-Jones et al discloses metadata could be stored along with annotation in order to easily identify an image.

32. Claims 14, 15 and 52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Cassorla et al. (US 5,146,552).

As per claim 14, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose each of the annotations can be selectively chosen for display on the digital image during the rendering step, however, this is known in the

art as taught by Cassorla et al., hereinafter Cassorla. Cassorla discloses a method of annotating document wherein selected annotation type is displayed (column 8, line 13-19).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Cassorta into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Cassorta discloses only selected annotations are displayed in order to un-clutter the display.

33. As per claim 15, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted that Higgins does not explicitly disclose each of the annotations can be displayed according to a predefined user grouping, however, this is known in the art as taught by Cassorla. Cassorla discloses a method of annotation wherein annotations are grouped according to user generated (column 8, line 13-19).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Cassorta into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Cassorta discloses annotations are grouped according to user generated in order to facilitated analysis.

34. As per claim 52, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 1, and since the limitation is similar to claim 14, it is similarly rejected as claim 14.

35. Claims 30 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. and Skoll et al. (US 6,684,379) as applied to claim 28 above, and further in view of Kerr et al. (US 4,772,206).

As per claim 30, Higgins and Skoll demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 28.

Higgins and Skoll disclose a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins and Skoll does not explicitly disclose the annotations are saved in a format that can be electronically queried, however, this is known in the art as taught by Kerr et al., hereinafter Kerr. Kerr discloses an image display where images with associated annotation could be queried in a query mode (column 30, line 64-67).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Kerr into Higgins and Skoll because Higgins and Skoll disclose a method of annotating an image and Kerr discloses the annotation could saved and searched in a query mode in order to quickly identify the image.

36. As per claim 31, Higgins, Skoll and Kerr demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 30, and Higgins further discloses the annotations are capable of being retrieved for interactive display ("the maps may be viewed simultaneously – top-and-bottom, side-by-side – or quasi-simultaneously, for example, toggling rapidly back and forth", Abstract).

37. Claims 32 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. and Skoll as applied to claim 28 above, and further in view of Lloyd-Jones et al. (US 2002/0055955).

As per claim 32, since the claim limitation is claim 28 and 11 combined, it is similarly rejected as claims 28 and 11.

As per claim 33, since the claim limitation is similar to claims 28 and 16 combined, it is similarly rejected as claims 28 and 16 combined.

38. Claim 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins, Skoll and Lloyd-Jones as applied to claim 32 above, and further in view of Bergman et al. (US 6,564,263).

As per claim 34, Higgins, Skoll and Lloyd-Jones demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 32.

It is noted that Higgins, Skoll and Lloyd-Jones do not explicitly disclose wherein the metadata comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of: the name of the author or creator of each of the annotations, a date indicating when annotation was added to the digital image, a title, a subject, a description, and an area of specialty of the author or creator. However, this is known in the art as taught by Bergman et al., hereafter Bergman. Bergman discloses a metadata for annotations includes author/publisher, date, location of event (column 8, line 55-59).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Bergman into Higgins, Skoll and Lloyd-Jones because Higgins, Skoll and Lloyd-Jones disclose a method of annotating an image and Bergman discloses metadata of the annotation could be some identifying parameters in order to help identify the image.

39. Claims 46 and 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 21 above, and further in view of Romano et al. (US 6,269,366).

As per claim 46, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins does not explicitly disclose wherein the visual representation of the digital data is a group of visual data elements that each has the dimension of the original digital data, but each visual data element is unique in the conceptual space that merits a grouping to visualize the similarities or differences of the visual elements. However, this is known in the art as taught by Romano et al., hereinafter Romano. Romano discloses a method of grouping in which a plurality of images are grouped into different annotation groups and each image grouping is relevant to a user profile (Figure 3 and column 3, line 48-50 where user profile is considered a factor to group similar images).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Romano into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Romano discloses a method of grouping images according to a user profile for the purpose of making it easier to present similar images according to a particular user.

40. As per claim 47, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins does not explicitly disclose an identifier means for marking each annotation with user

identifying information to track authorship of the respective annotation. However, this is known in the art as taught by Romano. Romano discloses a method of grouping images according to user profile (Figure 3 and column 3, line 48-50 where user profile is considered a factor to group similar images, and user profile is consider authorship).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Romano into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating an image and Romano discloses a method of grouping image according to a user profile for the purpose of making it easier to present similar images according to a particular user.

41. Claims 48, 49, 53 and 54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins et al. as applied to claim 41 above, and further in view of Anderson et al. (US 5,581,682).

As per claim 48, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins does not explicitly disclose wherein the presenting means is capable of restricting the display of at least a portion of the annotations based upon previously defined viewing rights assigned to each user. However, this is known in the art as taught by Anderson et al., hereinafter Anderson. Anderson discloses a annotating of an image in which "where many reviewers are involved, it may be desirable to hide some of the annotations or restrict access to view certain annotations (column 2, line 12-17).

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Anderson into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating images and Anderson

discloses certain annotations could be restricted according to users in order to provide user specific information.

42. As per claim 49, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 41.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins does not explicitly disclose wherein the presenting means is capable of restricting the display of at least a portion of the annotations based upon user input. However, this is known in the art as taught by Anderson. Anderson discloses a annotating of an image in which "an annotated final form document may have a series of annotations to which there is a hierarchy of access to each annotation", column 2, line 15-17.

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Anderson into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating images and Anderson discloses certain annotations could be accessed according to users input in order to access user specific information.

43. As per claim 53, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 50.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins does not explicitly disclose the annotations can be selectively displayed pursuant to a predefined hierarchal relationship. However, this is known in the art as taught by Anderson. Anderson discloses a annotating of an image in which "an annotated final form document may have a series of annotations to which there is a hierarchy of access to each annotation", column 2, line 15-17.

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Anderson into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating images and Anderson discloses certain annotations could be accessed according to users input in order to access user specific information.

44. As per claim 54, Higgins demonstrated all the elements as disclosed in the rejected claim 52.

Higgins discloses a method of visually annotating an image. It is noted Higgins does not explicitly disclose the annotations can be selectively displayed the annotations can be selectively displayed pursuant to by specialty. However, this is known in the art as taught by Anderson. Anderson discloses a annotating of an image in which "an annotated final form document may have a series of annotations to which there is a hierarchy of access to each annotation", column 2, line 15-17, where each route of hierarchy is considered a specialty.

Thus, it would have been obvious to incorporate the teaching of Anderson into Higgins because Higgins discloses a method of annotating images and Anderson discloses certain annotations could be accessed according to users input in order to access user specific information.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Inquiries

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan R Yang whose telephone number is (571) 272-7666. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Razavi can be reached on (571) 272-7664. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Ryan Yang/
Primary Examiner
October 26, 2007